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SPECIAL NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

*Cuban Posture on Issues Related to the
Normalization of Relations with the US*

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**CUBAN POSTURE ON ISSUES RELATED
TO THE NORMALIZATION OF
RELATIONS WITH THE US**

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THIS ESTIMATE IS ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS, EXCEPT AS NOTED IN THE TEXT, AS FOLLOWS:

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the Estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency, the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Treasury, and Defense, and the National Security Agency.

Concurring:

The Deputy to the Director of Central Intelligence for the Intelligence Community, Vice Chairman

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence representing the Central Intelligence Agency

The Director of Intelligence and Research representing the Department of State

The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

The Director, National Security Agency

The Deputy Assistant Administrator for National Security, Energy Research and Development Administration

The Special Assistant to the Secretary for National Security, Department of the Treasury

The Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Abstaining:

None

Also Participating:

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

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CUBAN POSTURE ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH THE US

KEY JUDGMENTS

- Normalization of relations would serve Cuba's economic interests and, on balance, its political interests as well; but more fundamentally, Castro is seeking US acknowledgment of the legitimacy of the Cuban revolution.
- Castro is interested in normalizing relations with the US, but not at any price. He must be able credibly to represent the negotiations as having been arranged essentially on his terms.
- While there is some flexibility in Cuba's demand that the US lift trade restrictions as a precondition for negotiation, the Cubans cannot be expected to back down very far. If Castro cannot obtain compliance with the essence of this precondition, he would probably decide that the cost of normalization is too great.
- Cuba's insistence on being dealt with as an equal in negotiations is intended to convey its determination not to allow essential elements of its foreign or domestic policies to become issues of negotiation. These would include: Cuba's relationship with the Soviet Union, support of "progressive" governments and revolutionary movements, and Cuban political prisoners.
- The Soviets apparently favor normalization of relations, but they do not appear to be exerting pressure on the Cubans to come to terms with the US.
- Another spectacular act of violence by exile terrorists could pose a major problem for negotiations.

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- The Cubans have acknowledged the principle of compensation for expropriated property, but will meet US demands for compensation with their own claims for damages caused by US actions. Cuba's ability to finance any compensation is extremely limited, and any repayment would probably have to be facilitated by US credits at very favorable terms.
- Castro would almost certainly reject any US demands that Cuban troops be withdrawn from Angola and insist on Cuba's right to provide aid to legitimate governments and movements of national liberation.
- Cuba is unlikely to change its position on Puerto Rican independence, but would probably show some flexibility on this subject in the context of negotiations.
- While the Cubans will probably be willing to discuss certain human rights issues (e.g., repatriation of American citizens, reunification of families, emigration, and visits), they will almost certainly reject any discussion of Cuban political prisoners.
- Cuba is probably willing to renegotiate the antihijacking agreement, but only if the US takes adequate steps to curtail terrorism by Cuban exiles residing in the US.
- The Cubans will consider their relationship with the Soviets nonnegotiable, but may be willing to sign the Treaty of Tlatelolco providing for a Latin American nuclear-free zone under certain conditions.
- Removal of US restrictions on direct trade with Cuba would satisfy much, if not most, of Cuba's objectives. The remaining Cuban goals (return of Guantanamo, restoration of Most Favored Nation (MFN) status, cessation of overflights) have a lower priority, and can be negotiated at a more leisurely pace, from their point of view.
- Even if US-Cuban relations are normalized under the best of circumstances, they are not likely to be without friction and Castro's fundamental antipathy to US interests in Latin America and elsewhere can be expected to continue.

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